

OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

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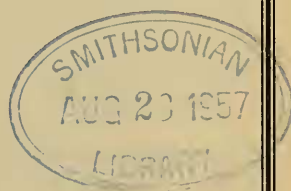
FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

Secretary to the Commission

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DIRECTION 61

Determination under the Plenary Powers of the gender
to be attributed to the generic name *Varuna* Milne
Edwards (H.), 1830 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda)
(supplement to *Opinion* 85)



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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN DIRECTION 61

A. The Officers of the Commission

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(12th August 1953)

Vice-President : Senhor Dr. Afranio do AMARAL (*Sao Paulo, Brazil*) (12th August 1953)

Secretary : Mr. Francis HEMMING (*London, England*) (27th July 1948)

B. The Members of the Commission

(Arranged in order of precedence by reference to date of election or of most recent re-election,
as prescribed by the International Congress of Zoology)

Professor H. BOSCHMA (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*)
(1st January 1947)

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Mr. Francis HEMMING (*London, England*) (27th July 1948) (*Secretary*)

Dr. Henning LECHE (*Universitetets Zoologiske Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark*) (27th
July 1948)

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(12th August 1953)

Dr. K. H. L. KEY (*Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation,
Canberra, A.C.T., Australia*) (15th October 1954)

Dr. Alden H. MILLER (*Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, U.S.A.*)
(29th October 1954)

Doc. Dr. Ferdinand PRANTL (*Národní Museum v Praze, Prague, Czechoslovakia*) (30th
October 1954)

Professor Dr. Wilhelm KÜHNELT (*Zoologisches Institut der Universität, Vienna, Austria*)
(6th November 1954)

Professor F. S. BODENHEIMER (*The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel*) (11th November
1954)

Professor Ernst MAYR (*Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge,
Massachusetts, U.S.A.*) (4th December 1954)

Professor Enrico TORTONESE (*Museo di Storia Naturale "G. Doria", Genova, Italy*)
(16th December 1954)

DIRECTION 61

DETERMINATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF
THE GENDER TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE GENERIC
NAME "VARUNA" MILNE EDWARDS (H.), 1830
(CLASS CRUSTACEA, ORDER DECAPODA)
(SUPPLEMENT TO "OPINION " 85)

RULING :—It is hereby ruled under the Plenary Powers that the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards (H.), 1830 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda), a name placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 85, is to be treated as being of the feminine gender.

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 13th April 1955, Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, prepared for the consideration of the Commission the following paper in which he drew attention to certain difficulties which had

been encountered in assigning to the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards (H.), 1830 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda), a name placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 85, a gender which would be both correct and also consistent with established practice :—

**Proposed use of the Plenary Powers to determine for the generic name
“Varuna” Milne Edwards (H.), 1830 (Class Crustacea, Order
Decapoda) a gender in harmony with accustomed usage**

By FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

(Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the Commission to use its Plenary Powers for the purpose of designating for the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards (H.), 1830 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda) a gender in harmony with accustomed usage. This generic name was placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 85. It is necessary therefore that an appropriate gender should be attributed to this name as soon as possible, in order that the preparation of the *Official List* for publication in book-form may not be held up on this account. The facts of this case are set out below.

2. The word “Varuna” is a non-Classical word and by reason of its “-a” termination, it was allotted a feminine gender by Mr. F. J. Lelievre in his report on genders, on the analogy of Latin nouns belonging to the first declension. The literature shows that from Milne Edwards onwards, authors have treated the generic name *Varuna* as being feminine in gender.

3. Professor H. Boschma (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*), while agreeing that it was desirable that the feminine gender should be attributed to this name in view of the fact that it is always treated as being of that gender, was the first to point out that this word should probably be treated as being masculine in gender, it being likely that, in naming this crab, Milne Edwards selected for its name “the name of the god of the waters, the Indian Neptune of Hindoo mythology” (letter dated 16th February 1955). Reference to Milne Edwards’s original description fully bears out Professor Boschma’s hypothesis, for in that description Milne Edwards wrote : “Le nom de Varuna, par lequel nous le designons génériquement, est celui de l’un des génies des eaux dans la mythologie indienne.” It is clear therefore that under the *Règles* this generic name is masculine in gender.

4. I have consulted both Dr. A. Fenner Chace (*United States National Museum, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.*) and Dr. Isobel Gordon (*British Museum (Natural History), London*) on this case. Dr. Chace, while stating that it seems to matter little which gender is assigned to it, says that this name "would be more readily acceptable to all carcinologists if it is treated as feminine" (letter of 22nd March 1955). Dr. Gordon replied (12th April 1955) that, in her opinion, "*Varuna* should be retained as feminine. Even Milne Edwards used the combination *Varuna litterata* from the start".

5. In the circumstances, I recommend that, either under the normal Plenary Powers procedure or under those Powers through the modified procedure recommended in Application Z.N.(S.) 938¹, the Commission should direct that the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards (H.), 1830, be treated as being of the feminine gender.

II. THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. Registration of the present application : Upon the receipt of Mr. Hemming's application the question of the gender to be attributed to the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 943.

3. Publication of the present application : The present application was sent to the printer on 21st April 1955 and was published on 7th July in the same year in Part 8 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (Hemming, 1955, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **11** : 263—264).

¹ The application here referred to was published in the same Part of the *Bulletin* (1955, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **11** : 256—259) as that in which appeared the present application relating to the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards, 1830.

4. Issue of Public Notices : Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 4 : 51—56), Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 7th July 1955 (a) in Part 8 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (the Part in which Mr. Hemming's application was published) and (b) to the other prescribed serial publications. In addition such Notice was given also to four general zoological serial publications in Europe and America.

5. No objection received : No objection to the action proposed in the present case was received from any source.

III. THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

6. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(56)21 : On 25th April 1956 a Voting Paper (V.P.(56)21) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against, "the proposal relating to the gender to be attributed to the generic name *Varuna* Milne Edwards (H.), 1830, as set out in paragraph 5 of page 264 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*" [i.e. in the paragraph numbered as above in the paper reproduced in the first paragraph of the present *Direction*].

7. The Prescribed Voting Period : As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 25th July 1956.

8. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(56)21 : At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting on Voting Paper V.P.(56)21 was as follows :—

(a) *Affirmative Votes had been given by the following twenty-three (23) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received) :*

Holthuis ; Boschma ; Vokes ; Hering ; Bodenheimer ;
Prantl ; Jaczewski ; Esaki ; do Amaral ; Hankó ;
Dymond ; Bonnet ; Key ; Mayr ; Lemche ; Riley ;
Mertens ; Cabrera ; Stoll ; Sylvester-Bradley ; Tortonese ;
Hemming ; Miller ;

(b) *Negative Votes, one (1) :*

Kühnelt ;

(c) *On Leave of Absence, one (1) :*

Bradley (J.C.) ;

(d) *Voting Papers not returned :*

None.

9. Declaration of Result of Vote : On 26th July 1956, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P.(56)21, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 8 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper had been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.

10. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present “ Direction ” :
On 25th January 1957, Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Direction* and at the same time signed a Certificate that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(56)21.

11. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Direction* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

12. The present *Direction* shall be known as *Direction Sixty-One (61)* of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Twenty-Fifth day of January, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Seven.

*Secretary to the International Commission
on Zoological Nomenclature*

FRANCIS HEMMING